1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

175 178 249 439 inaugurated a brief "golden age" in the evolution of the Recôncavo. The mythology which this age engendered is an integral part of the social and economic patterns in the present day Recôncavo. The collapse of the sugar economy in the West Indies, particularly in Santo Domingo in 1792, and the expanding urban markets in Europe had given, for a moment, a great opportunity to the sugar industry of Northeast Brazil. Moreover, an important supplementary market had developed in the mining areas of Minas Gerais. In the subsequent economic expansion to supply these markets, the Recôncavo became an even more important center of sugar production in Brazil.

175 248 471 565 569 471 The landed proprietors of the Recôncavo apparently took this resurgence as a vindication of their economic system.

> They squandered money like the fidalgos [landed, slave-holding aristocrats] that they were. They installed sumptuous dwellings and lived the life of a nobility. Each sugar factory was a community where hundreds of slaves were dedicated to extraction of wealth from the soil. Each of these communities achieved a merited importance. A little Agricultural World gyrated around the Big House, and the Chapel, with its Holy Administrator, [was] dedicated to the dissemination of Catholicism in the community. In time many of these "Engenhos" developed into villas, and were succeeded by the cities of today.
>
> Each of these "Engenhos," as these agricultural communities were called, produced everything that they consumed except luxury, and this was imported from Portugal in exchange for sugar, high-grade tobacco, cotton, and rare cabinet woods. The "Senhor" of the Engenho was a veritable Feudal Baron, with the power of life and death over his black and mestizo slaves. He exercised the right of torture and flogging in proportion to the offenses committed. These sugar Engenhos, because of their collective and independent existence, produced a pride of origin, an attachment to the soil, that flowered into a hatred of the monarchial exploiters and became the dominating factor in the movement for independence.
>
> The fidalgos were essentially a product of the land, and spent the major part of their luxurious existence on their estates, attended by innumerable slaves. Their homes were built upon a vast scale and equipped with every luxury known to so simple a people. They also

• [466]

175 249 471 565 [668]

1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

175 249 567 [563] the offspring of master and slave and sometimes were considered as members of the household.

A set of feudalistic inter-relations developed in the society, loosely defining the responsibilities and privileges of master and slave. Ideally the slave had the privilege, almost the right, to appeal to the master in person for assistance and advice. Manumission and the granting of the right to purchase freedom were common. At the [466] same time, the economic system was based upon involuntary labor. The slave was exploited, and the fruit of his toil went to maintain the luxurious existence of the small upper class.

175 565 [463] [554] The small freemen occupied a very inferior social and economic position in this society. In the cities they became tradesmen or craftsmen, occupations without status. In the country some were petty dependents of the engenho, others established themselves as small cultivators. Since the sugar cane plantations dominated the central Recôncavo, it seems reasonable to assume that the small holders were segregated mainly in the outer zone.

175 161 162 In 1819--during the florescence of the Recôncavo--the population of the comarca (district) of Bahia was 362,503. Most of this population was centered in the Recôncavo--200,000 in the lowlands north of the Bay--the sugar cane area--and 77,503 in the western uplands around Cachoeira--the tobacco area.[31] At this time the total population of Bahia was estimated at 592,908 and that of Brazil as between 175 4,000,000 to 4,500,000.[32] Salvador, with a population somewhere 633 between 100,000 and 130,000, was the largest city in Brazil and re- 162 mained so until 1830.[33] The class and ethnic composition of the 175 563 population of this period is not clearly indicated. By some estimates, 565 over half of the population of Bahia was slave and over three-fifths 567

1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

249
471

Land:
9,000 hectares in 19 plantations and ranches; each of the 15 cane plantations has a small settlement, livestock, and a weighing station.

Transportation Equipment:
25 kilometers of railway, 9 locomotives, over 100 railway cars, 4 trucks, 2 jeeps, and for each cane plantation an average of 10 ox carts.

Agricultural Machinery:
9 tracked tractors with accessory plows and grading equipment, 1 wheeled tractor, and on each cane plantation 4 or 5 ox-drawn plows.

Housing:
About 50 houses and miscellaneous service buildings for each cane plantation.

Processing Plant:
Grinding and extracting plant, distillery, power house, 2 warehouses, garage, railroad shop, and medical dispensary.

Miscellaneous:
Office building, houses for company manager and administrator, school for the mill settlement, and church.

249 The operation of such a large enterprise as this requires a large administrative staff. The administrative staff of the particular usina described above includes the following: a general manager for all properties; an administrator over all the plantations; an administrator in charge of the mill; a sub-administrator over each group of four or five plantations; and an overseer and several foremen for each plantation. There are also a number of supervisors in the mill and on the

249 railroad. In addition, the usina pays the salary of the teachers in
• 466 the local school, engages the priest for the irregular services which are held in the church of the usina establishment, and in conjunction

[178] with several other nearby usinas, employs a doctor. These activities reflect the desire of the sugar company to stabilize labor relations through social services, but on a more impersonal basis than was characteristic of the feudalistic sugar system of the nineteenth century.

258 Manioc can be converted into a staple food which is easy to transport and store by simple processes and small-scale enterprises.

1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

128 241 (2) tobacco production; (3) manioc production; (4) the land rotation system; and (5) alternative agricultural products.

249 471 For three centuries the sugar industry was the basis of the commercial economy of the Recôncavo, and for the last century it has continued to play an important role. As a result of its long and profitable history, it has a number of advantages as a basis for agricultural development. Its capital assets are large--the best land in the region, a number of industrial plants, and a transportation network. Moreover, its [565] land is organized into large units, many of which are under the control of a single company, and all of which are under the control of a small group of the upper class. The industry has a large administrative staff, the most experienced in the region in large-scale enterprises—the organization of agricultural and industrial production, labor, transportation, and finance. It has the very great advantage of good political connections and government support. A part of the industry, [242] composed chiefly of the largest usinas, has had some experience with improved varieties of cane, and on a very limited scale with mechanization.

249 471 433 Against these advantages are a number of limiting factors. Most of the local capital of the sugar industry apparently is committed in the present plant. The sugar economy of the Recôncavo is large scale only in relation to the other agricultural enterprises of the region--the mean daily capacity of the mills can scarcely exceed 500 ton. Moreover, many of the mills are obsolescent—there is only one new usina, and only the larger mills have very much new equipment. Despite [464] the presumed administrative skill of the industry, labor has been one [178] of the continuing problems since the deterioration of the old feudalistic [466] employer-employee relationships of the late nineteenth century. However,

VILA RECÔNCAVO

[The Private Plantation]

The following discussion will examine one of the five private plantations in the community of Vila Recôncavo and will then describe the network of factory plantations in the same community.

The Private Plantation: Fazenda das Moças

The Fazenda das Moças ("G" on map of community) is typical of a privately owned plantation in all respects but one. Its owner is a lady who assumed active direction of the plantation after her husband's death. At first there was some difficulty in persuading the overseer of the plantation to take orders from a woman, for he felt his prestige was lowered in the eyes of the workmen as well as the overseers of neighboring plantations. However, after three or four years, Dona Sinhá, in cooperation with "Seu"[1] Paulo, the overseer, has made an outstanding success of her plantation, and the original friction between the two has greatly diminished. Below is an inventory of the Fazenda das Moças:

Extent: 930 tarefas,[2] mostly of massapê, 450 of which are under sugar-cane cultivation, the rest consisting of pasture and small gardens

Water: 4 drinking tanks for livestock
2 small freshwater streams
(Drinking water must be brought from a neighboring plantation, which has a spring well known in the area for the salubrious qualities of its water.)

Houses: 45 workers' houses
Owner's house, with living room, dining room, 4 bedrooms, kitchen, bathroom, 2 maids' rooms, 2 other dependencies, veranda; surrounded by orchard
1 overseer's house
1 house formerly used as a school

---

1. "Seu" is a corruption of Senhor and is a title often given to persons of some prestige.

2. The tarefa is the unit of land measurement used in Bahia. It equals 900 square braças. The braça equals 6 feet, which gives the tarefa 32,400 square feet. This is 11,160 square feet less than one acre.

[The Private Plantation]

the town of Vila Recôncavo. João lives in the owner's house, enjoying her confidence to a greater degree than anyone else except perhaps the overseer. This is frequently the cause of friction between the cowboy and overseer, and this fact is not helped by the fact that João is an inlander (sertanejo), a true cowboy, taciturn and independent, from the cattle country to the north of Recôncavo. When Dona Sinhá is away, he occupies a different position, subject to the orders of Seu Paulo unless Dona Sinhá has left definite instructions for him. When Dona Sinhá is present he receives orders directly from her, bypassing the overseer. João is in a position to check on much of the plantation activity, bringing to the owner's attention any necessary works forgotten by Seu Paulo.

Below the owner, overseer, foreman, and cowboy are the bulk of the resident workmen (moradores). On the Fazenda das Moças, there is a population of slightly over two hundred men, women, and children, providing a working force of between sixty and seventy men and boys, plus a few women who occasionally do light work in the fields.

Below is an extract from one of the fortnightly pay sheets of the plantation. A brief explanation of the list, beginning at the top, will give a good idea of at least a part of the work on a plantation in this community. The "second weeding of a cane field" indicates that the man worked in a field which had already been weeded once since planting. Depending upon the amount of sunshine and rain and the quality of the weeding done, a field may have to be weeded as many as seven times between harvests. A cane field (taboleiro) varies from ten to twenty tarefas, and each field is numbered. Seu Paulo can therefore assign a man to weed a certain field, and they will both know whether it is the first, second, third, or other weeding. The weedings become progressively more difficult so that the amount paid per unit increases with the number of weedings. Weeding constitutes one of the major expenditures on Fazenda das Mocas, as it is done slowly with a hoe. As with all other tasks on the plantation, there is a set price for this work.

"Carrying seed" indicates the transference of bundles of tops of sugar-cane stalks from a field where they are cut to another where they are planted. The amount paid per trip increases with the distance the man must travel between fields. As a rule, several fields of cane are planted to be used exclusively for seed. The next item on the list, "cutting seed,"

2: Hutchinson E-4,5 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11
VILA RECÔNCAVO

[The Private Plantation]

Maria das Dores, whose name is listed as "gathering cane leaves for animal fodder," does the only type of work on the plantation done by women other than housework and gardening. When a field of cane is cut, the tops of the stalks and the long leaves are cut off and left on the ground. The very tip of the stalk is used as seed, while the heavier part is loaded on carts and sent to the factory. When natural pasturage gives out because of overgrazing or drought, the cattle's diet is supplemented with the freshly cut, green cane leaves; if the tender tips are not required for seed, they are also fed to the cattle. Gathering the leaves and stalk tips is relatively light work, and if a woman on the plantation wants to supplement her husband's income this is the task assigned her. Few women on this plantation do it, however, for it is a point of pride with any husband that he is capable of supporting his wife without her having to do gainful work. Only a small number of leaves are gathered up, and the remainder are burned as they lie in the field. Burning is done at night when there is little or no wind, and often during the summer fires which extend for acres dot the countryside. Burning is a traditional practice. Although professional agronomists insist that it is injurious to the cane roots and the new shoots, planters continue to burn the unwanted leaves, feeling that the ash provides some fertilization.

"Gardening" refers to work done in the vegetable garden which supplies Dona Sinhá's house. This garden stands in contrast to the roças, which are planted by the workers as well as by Dona Sinhá, and which are reserved for beans, manioc, corn, and some tobacco. Such plants as lettuce, tomatoes, cabbage, carrots, and other vegetables are disdained by the workers and are grown only for Dona Sinhá.

"Carrying water" is usually work reserved for a small boy. Mounted on a donkey with four wooden kegs he rides to the neighboring plantation, Pedras, which belongs to the factory, fills the kegs at the spring, and returns to Fazenda das Moças where he puts the water into the various large clay containers in the kitchen and washrooms of the owner's house. "Oh, Pedro, there's no water" is a common cry heard in Dona Sinhá's house.

There are few rules restricting the workers. Their services must be at the disposal of Dona Sinhá whenever required. Other than that, if during a slack season a man finds an opportunity to work somewhere else, he is free to do so. If he has a burro, or oxen, he has the right to pasture them on the

lands of the plantation, renting them to Dona Sinhá at harvest time for transport. Often a family has one or two pack horses or burros which can be used to transport cane or, at other times of the year, water or firewood. A worker also has the right to a plot to raise food crops. If the man in the household dies or deserts his family, the woman who is left can do one of several things: go to work in the field herself, the least popular alternative; send her children out to work if they are old enough; find another husband, which is not too difficult, for there is a scarcity of women in this rural zone; or return to her father's house.

A group of workers who are essential to the well-being of the plantation, but who are not residents, are the caatinguejros (migrant workers from the scrubby forest area which borders on the Recôncavo and extends into the desert to the north). Hundreds of these men are available during the harvest season, a time when not only the plantations but the factories as well need more men than the resident population provides. The town of Vila Recôncavo, the other small rural towns, and the capital city do not supply agricultural workers to the rural areas. The plantations use instead the migrants from the north. A system has grown up whereby each plantation and factory has a man who can contact these migrant laborers. This man is called the empreiteiro, a contractor who has a system of contacts in the north usually through family and godparent relationships. The migrant workers are housed in the barracks, and generally keep themselves well apart from the residents. Only men come, leaving their families at home to care for their small farms and livestock while they earn money in the Recôncavo. None of these men appears on the plantation payroll. It is the empreiteiro who contracts with the overseer to have the required work done by the migrant laborers. Usually this work consists only of weeding, which must be done constantly but which at harvest time the resident workers cannot do. On the list of jobs and wages, above, there appears the name of Mario Adriano, who received 921,30 cruzeiros for weeding 249 braças. This man is the empreiteiro, who is paid for work done by fifteen, twenty, or more men. He in turn pays the migrant laborers, giving them less than the price for which he agreed with the overseer to do the work. In this way the contractor earns a living. Throughout the harvest season he gets work for about seventy-five to one hundred migrants, who camp in and about the barracks and

have little to do with the residents. At the end of the season they can be seen walking along the paths of the Recôncavo toward the north, each man carrying over his shoulder a stick from which is suspended a cloth bundle containing his few possessions. 249* 464

One prominent aspect of the relationships between people in this hierarchy is the intimacy and familiarity which has for so long characterized the Recôncavo. While slavery was not a benign institution anywhere, there was a softness in the relations between the Brazilian and his slaves which seems to have been absent in other slave areas. This quality persists today on private plantations such as Fazenda das Moças between the owner and the workers. Dona Sinhá knows the residents by name or nickname, knows their background and present condition; the worker knows Dona Sinhá's family background, her children, and her extended family. 249* 466 571 [567]

The former master is now the patron. It is she who arbitrates any differences between workers, or between a worker and Seu Paulo. It is her task to protect the worker against injustices, to provide medical care, to aid at weddings and baptisms, in short to do all the things the worker is unable to do through ignorance, fear, or poverty.

The relationship between Dona Sinhá and Seu Paulo is a curious one, for neither one of them can do without the other. The role of overseer came into being for several reasons, the primary one being the absenteeism of the owner. In order to keep the plantation running properly all year long it was necessary for someone with knowledge and authority to be present all the time; so the former feitor-mor became known as the overseer, with a house larger and better than that of anyone else on the plantation except the owner. As time went on, the overseer gathered more and more rights and privileges unto himself, until today he is the veritable owner of the plantation in all but the legal sense. He has the confidence and loyalty of the workmen, without which he would be a failure. He eventually becomes related to nearly all of them through the system of godparentship; in fact, he is more sought after than the owner for this purpose. On the Fazenda das Moças, the overseer is paid a higher salary than any other overseer in the area--as much as Cr$1.500,00 a month in comparison with Cr$1.000,00 or less for the others. In addition he receives a bonus at the end of the year, one cruzeiro for each ton of sugar cane the plantation produced during the year. 249* 463 466 571 [608] [465]

VILA RECÔNCAVO

[The Private Plantation]

*
249 Dona Sinhá and other plantation owners feel that a planta-
463 tion cannot be successful without a good overseer, and they
• 466 also feel that the white man does not make a good overseer.
571 They say he cannot stand the heat of the summer and the rain
829 and mud of the winter when spending entire days in the saddle overseeing the work. Only the indefatigable mestiço is supposed to be able to take such punishment. The owners also say that only he can deal properly with the mestiço workers--that, being one himself, he knows their "foibles and tricks." To a certain extent the mestiço population seems to agree with this, for orders from the overseer are much more promptly obeyed than orders from the owner, and most of the workmen prefer to have the overseer explain what is wanted. It is also believed that the mestiço is stronger. For example, if Dona Sinhá has made a hard trip in the winter to get to the plantation the workers will sympathize with her, saying, "You came through all that rain and mud, and at night!" when the same trip may be a daily one for the overseer, the cowboy, or any of the workers.

*
249 However, the creation of the position of overseer has also
463 created a series of new problems for the owners. All owners
466 now suspect their overseers of cheating them, and the control
571 of the overseer is a subject which comes up frequently at social gatherings. Since the owner is absent from the plantation about half the year, there are many things which the overseer must do without consulting his employer. The owners will interpret independent action on the overseer's part as good management, mismanagement, or cheating, depending upon the results of the action. When the results are doubtful and there is any suspicion that the overseer might have gained money by his action, it is considered cheating. Very often the owners claim that the overseer and the foreman are "partners" working together against him.

*
249 On one plantation in the community of Vila Recôncavo, the
463 owner decided he would be his own overseer. He was young
433 and had been born and brought up on the plantation. Within a
466 few years his harvest had dropped to almost nothing, and lately he has changed to raising milk cows, at which he has not
571 been particularly successful either. He himself, and all his friends, blame his lack of success on the lack of an overseer, saying that even though the old overseer had cheated and helped himself to what was not his, the plantation as a whole had not suffered as badly as it did without him.

2: Hutchinson E-4, 5 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11
VILA RECÔNCAVO

As a result, owners have to be satisfied with higher costs than they feel necessary and less profit than they think possible, the difference going to the overseer, rather than accept the complete failure of the plantation Overseers, foremen, and owners are all aware of the situation, but politeness, the traditional respect patterns, and the unwillingness to compete openly keep the situation covert. 249* 463 466 571

Nevertheless, on Fazenda das Moças, in spite of these difficulties there is considerable cooperation between Dona Sinhá and Seu Paulo. The duties of the overseer are confined generally to the plantation itself--seeing that the work is done, the cane planted, cultivated, harvested, and delivered to the factory as expediently as possible. The duties of Dona Sinhá are mainly concerned with finance, with arranging ready funds to meet the current expenses of the plantation. The practice of mortgaging crops did not end with the abolition of slavery, and it is the owner's task to juggle funds, loans, and interest so she will have enough money to improve and increase the yield of her plantation. In general the owners of single plantations rarely have enough funds to carry them through the year. Payrolls are met throughout the year with advances on the estimated harvest made by the factory, by the banks, or by the Cooperative of Sugar-Cane Growers and Suppliers. Thus when the season ends the owner is already in debt, part of which he must pay off in order to finance the coming year. There are two problems constantly present in the struggle to increase the size of the harvest: cost of production, and the antiquated methods used on the private plantations, where practically all work is done by hand. 249* 463 426 [433]

Table 1 shows production, costs, and profits for the harvests of the years 1947-48, 1948-49, and 1949-50 at Fazenda das Moças. The drop in production and the rise in costs in the years 1948-49 were attributed to a slackening of the vigilance of Dona Sinhá and to a poor overseer. It was at the end of this year that Seu Paulo assumed the position of overseer of the plantation. The following year showed a great improvement which has continued. for the 1950-51 harvest produced 6,000 tons, the highest output of any private plantation in the Recôncavo. Future harvests are expected to go well above this. In addition to changing the overseer, and in the following year the foreman, Dona Sinhá was able to borrow enough money to purchase the tractor mentioned earlier. The next year, as a result of the evident success of the new combination, two four- 249* 43 [426] [407] [493]

Hutchinson E-4,5 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11
VILA RECÔNCAVO

TABLE 1
PRODUCTION, COSTS, PROFITS: FAZENDA DAS MOÇAS

1947-1948	
4,000 tons of cane at the selling price of Cr$81,40 a ton	Cr$325.600,00
Cost of production	206.244,00
Profit	119.356,00
1948-1949	
2,500 tons of cane at Cr$88,90	222.250,00
Cost of production	225.198,00
Loss	32.948,00
1949-1950	
5,000 tons of cane at Cr$107,40	537.000,00
Cost of production	319.248,00
Profit	217.751,00

wheeled carts were added which could be drawn by the tractor, thus cutting down transportation costs. Recently a jeep was acquired to pull the carts, and a second tractor equipped with the mechanism to cultivate cane fields was purchased.

Still, the plantation is heavily in debt, and any profits are immediately used for improvements or for paying off debts. Moreover, the cost of tractors, jeeps, and fertilizer is very high since they are imported products. Because of the dollar exchange rate their cost is extravagantly high in Brazil, compared with the United States. In addition, the plantation is still burdened with the old equipment and the necessity of pasture for the oxen, which cuts down the acreage available for planting. Animal traction cannot yet be entirely dispensed with, because of the condition of the soil in winter. The problem of maintaining the old system of work as well as introducing the new, which can only slowly pay for itself, is considerable. Dona Sinhá is faced with the dilemma of difficult natural conditions which, while good in many ways for sugar-cane, impede the application of modern techniques. She is also faced with personnel problems in relation to the overseer. One solution is clearly apparent and has been adopted by Dona Sinhá: to spend more and more time on the plantation, sharing more and more work with Seu Paulo. This of course is a complete break with the past traditions of the plantation master. It is a difficult break for both parties concerned. Dona Sinhá misses her city

2: Hutchinson E-4, 5 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

VILA RECÔNCAVO

249 * 178 466 ●

life, and Seu Paulo resents the continued presence of the owner and the consequent lessening of his authority.

Along with their feeling of pride and love for the Recôncavo, many landowners recognize clearly the difficulties with which they are faced. The following excerpt from the diary of Dona Sinhá, which I was allowed to read, illustrates the outlook of a sugar-cane planter of the Recôncavo:

[757]

. . . "Dona Sinhá, there is a man here looking for you." "What is it, my son?" "I have some boils coming out all over my body." Some sulfa and a little ointment do the trick, and just in time, for here comes Seu Paulo, the overseer.

"The oxen of Pedras, the neighboring plantation, invaded the cane fields last night. Also those of Seu Cosme." "I'll telephone the usina immediately." "Also, there are no wagons at the loading point." "I'll find out about that too."

The tractor driver comes, complaining that there is no oil. I get that from the storeroom. Now there are two men on the veranda wanting to know about the last payday, when they claim their money "came out wrong." Going through the pay sheets, that was straightened out.

249 * 829 178

Now, while there is no one else, I'll go out and look over the fields. I look at the plantings, feel the earth which I love. But it doesn't satisfy me. Something is missing. We are backward and retrogressing, passively. This place puts an inertia in the heart of a person, a desire to stop fighting, to find everything fine and as it should be--the ragamuffin Negroes, poorly fed, ignorant and rude, their dirty children with protruding stomachs and the white pretending that there is progress, his house full of company, electricity, radio, telephone, horseback rides, poetry of Baudelaire, Verlaine, philosophy of Voltaire, Carlyle, etc. --but in the end, zero! Sometimes I feel a tremendous anguish, I feel that nothing can be done in the Recôncavo and I want to leave this paralyzed land, poisoned with tradition, with its ruined sobrados. And we today hold fast to these fantasies and want to relive the opulent past. Deep down there is a clash against these indefatigable overseers, mulattoes, and Negroes with their boots, senhores da fazenda.

2s Hutchinson E-4,8 (1950-1951) 1987 8011 Bahia Brazilians 8011
VILA RECONCAVO

249 361 a Mass can be celebrated for the family when a priest is available.

Situated nearest the chalet are the houses of the general overseer, the chief mechanic of the factory, the major office employees, and the director of the factory store. Next in order are the houses of the technical personnel of the factory. Behind them and farthest from the center are the homes of the agricultural workers who work on the plantation nearest the factory nucleus. The regional overseer of this plantation also lives among his plantation workers. The school and the store are located just outside the small park of the chalet.

[342] [177] The chalet has replaced the former solar (mansion) of the plantation masters. Its style differs from the earlier type and its name is derived from the fact that it is a modified copy of a Swiss chalet. In a different way it is as ornate as the old solar, but more up-to-date, with running water and electricity.

249 466 The personal, paternal aspect of the private plantation obviously cannot function on the usina, which has 1,350 people living on its lands. There is, nevertheless, an attempt at just such relations. The owning family spends vacations in the chalet. They also spend Christmas, Carnaval, and Botada[6] there, and at those times there are parties for the workers, Christmas presents for them and for their wives and children, dances, and ball games. The Coronel (Colonel, an honorary title now going out of use), the patriarch of the family, now incapacitated, still receives visits from the older workmen who used to have daily contact with him. His son and son-in-law, present directors of the enterprise, make their presence felt throughout the factory and the six plantations as best they can. As on the private plantation, the final arbitration of any difficulty lies with the usineiro, and no worker considers himself too far removed to go to him if he cannot get satisfaction from his overseer. However, the strongest relationships, both business and personal, lie between overseer and worker--employee and employee--rather than between employee and employer.

The private plantation presents a far better appearance than

---

[788] 6. Botada is the annual blessing of the factory machinery, performed on the first day of the grinding season. It is a traditional ceremony formerly carried out on the plantations.

VILA RECÔNCAVO

[The Usina]

The private plantation presents a far better appearance than any plantation belonging to the factory, for it is usually "home" to the owner, who is interested in keeping it as pleasant as possible, while the factory plantation in charge of an overseer is simply a business project existing only to produce sugar cane.

At the Usina São Pedro, as stated earlier for the Recôncavo generally, the consolidation of land by the corporations has not turned the entire property into one large plantation. Instead, each plantation has retained its old boundaries, indeed complete autonomy, following only the general policies of the factory directory. The Usina São Pedro happens to be situated in a central position in relation to its six plantations. This is not always the case, for frequently the lands of a factory are scattered far from the plant itself, creating difficulties of administration and transportation.

Each of the plantations has its own nucleus, the street of workers' houses oriented toward the house of the overseer. Each of these little villages has its own small store, usually a private enterprise of the overseer. The largest plantation, Pedras, has a chapel and a school. None of the plantations has an electric power line, but each has a telephone in the overseer's house. The feeling of isolation and abandonment is strong, as indeed it is on almost all overseer-directed plantations belonging to a factory. There is a general feeling of pity for the residents who are situated so far from their patrão and whose first recourse must be the overseer, a man like themselves, with little or no education and little interest in the people other than to keep them working. In other words, the factory plantation lacks the paternal hand of the owner. In other respects it is similar to the private plantation in that it has an overseer, a foreman, a cowboy, and resident workmen.

The bulk of the agricultural direction of the São Pedro plantations is in the hands of the general overseer, Seu Pipiu. It is his duty to direct and supervise the activities of all six plantations. He is a man of no small status. He is practically independent in his actions, for the directors of the factory tell him how much cane they feel they need in the forthcoming harvest, and it is up to him to produce it. The methods and problems in doing this are left up to him. Seu Pipiu gives orders to each of the regional overseers, whose duties are the same as those of the overseer on a private plantation. The only difference is that they are dealing with a superior employee, instead of with the owner in person. The general over-

2: Hutchinson E-4, 6 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11
VILA RECÔNCAVO

* 249
463 seer is entitled to the same rights and privileges as any other worker: a house, land on which to grow subsistence crops,
• 466 and the use of the owner's pastures for his oxen, burros, and horses. The horses used in his work are supplied by the cor-
[492] poration, as are those of the other overseers. His salary is
[465] high: Cr$2.000,00 a month, plus a bonus of one cruzeiro for each ton of cane produced on all six plantations. The regional overseers receive Cr$800,00 a month, plus a bonus of half a
* 249 cruzeiro per ton of cane produced on their plantation. Seu
463 Pipiu has been general overseer of Usina São Pedro for twen-
159 ty-five years, during which time he has accumulated a good deal of property. He is a mulatto, somewhat lighter skinned than the six administrators who are under him. Two of his
[427] sons work in the factory office, and a third runs the store on one of the plantations. In addition he is a small farmer, renting some forty acres from the factory, on which he plants sugar cane. He pays 25 per cent of the harvest to the factory for the use of the land.

* 249 The usineiros have the same complaints against their gen-
466 eral overseers that private plantation owners have against theirs. At the same time, after many years of service such an official becomes indispensable, or is thought to be, and is allowed to go his way--quiet, well dressed, well mounted, ruler of all he surveys--while the usineiro watches and mutters to himself.

* 249 So far the rural properties of the factories have led the pri-
[184] vate plantations in the field of mechanization, as they have greater funds for purchasing equipment and can get more use out of each piece. Mechanization, however, is used as yet only in preparing the soil for planting. The ground is plowed and replowed, and grooves are made to receive the cane shoots. Also, planting in unplowed land is still common--grooves are opened for the seed with the simple plow, and no soil preparation is done at all. Here mechanization ends, and
[496] all further cultivation, as well as the cutting and harvesting of the cane, is done by hand. Narrow-gauge railway tracks
[493] reach out from the mill to loading points on the six planta-
[311] tions, where the cane is transferred from the oxcarts to the railroad wagons to be drawn to the mill. Approximately two thousand acres are under cultivation; the remaining land is used as pasture or as garden plots by the workers, in accordance with a rotation system.

000 Financially the two units--factory and plantation--are run

2: Hutchinson E-4,5 (1950-1951) 1957 8011 Bahia Brazilians 8011
VILA RECÔNCAVO

249* 435

ing a heavy cane and increasing their tonnage rather than in raising the quality of the cane. There is a movement under way to change the payment method to payment by percentage of sucrose, but it seems to be gaining little headway.[7]

249* 46

The factory of the Usina São Pedro is directed personally by two members of the Conde family, while most other factories have a paid employee, a general manager, who is the industrial counterpart of the general overseer. There are approximately eighty salaried employees in this factory, who are paid by the day and who work all year long. The factory operates from September till February--the harvest season--in two shifts of twelve hours each. During the harvest season over a hundred migrant workers are added to the payroll under the direction of the contractor, and usually work on the endless belt and in the unloading operations.

249* 466

The resident factory worker, in addition to receiving a house, also has the right to electric light and to firewood. These workers are trained in the factory, and many of them have been there for a long time. The Usina São Pedro is especially proud of the loyalty of its men, many of whom remained there during the war when they were being enticed away with higher wages by the federal government to build military installations. The Usina São Pedro has experienced no labor difficulties as have some other larger factories, which have had riots and demonstrations caused by labor unions. This is due partly to the small size of the factory, and partly to the continued atmosphere of paternalism, to which many other factories are now making a determined effort to return.

Thus paternalism stands out as one of the major factors in the complicated organizational hierarchy of plantation life. The former master is now simply the patron, but in this role he carries out almost the same functions as did the master in relation to the well-being of his slaves. The patron of today has the same ethical responsibilities toward his workmen as did the former master. In general these responsibilities include care of the workmen beyond the mere payment of a salary, such as care of the sick and the old. Paternalism today is found at its highest degree on the private, family-run plantation and at its lowest degree on the overseer-run, corpora-

7. Jayme V. B. Machado, Industria açucareira na Bahia (Bahia, 1950).

VILA RECÔNCAVO

[The Usina]

tion plantation. At its highest level it is a form of unwritten social security which works well, supplementing the low wages which are paid throughout the area. Even on the factory plantations there is a mild form of paternalism, which is stronger in plantations nearer to the factory and to the home of the usineiro.

The migrant workers, however, do not fit into the pattern of paternalism, mostly because they do not seek it. Indirectly they receive its benefits, for if one of them is ill he can go to the contractor who will then go to the plantation owner or usineiro for medicine or whatever is needed. But in general the migrant laborers stay by themselves and ask little or nothing of their employers.

In addition to the protection provided by a paternalistic system, the workers have the right to at least half an acre of land on the plantation where they can plant and raise their subsistence crops. Often they also plant tobacco, both in these plots and in the small areas throughout the plantation where no sugar cane is planted, such as corners where the plow cannot penetrate. The tobacco is sold to traveling buyers who scour the area at the tobacco harvest season. The money thus gained belongs to the workers, and many of them say that cash earned in such a way provides the "extras" they like during the year, such as rum, cigarettes, a pair of earrings, or some perfume.

2: Hutchinson E-4,8 (1960-1961) 1987 8011 Bahia Brazilians 8011

VILA RECÔNCAVO

565*

constantly growing, or at least changing. New members are added, people who have made their mark on the society and who, although they have less family tradition behind them, are on the whole acceptable to the elite.

565* 576

Locally the upper-class members are addressed by the formal term o senhor and a senhora, at times by meu patrão or meu branco (my white), frequently by title name, such as "Dr. Louis," and in some cases by the traditional intimate term of yoyô (for a man) and yayá (for a woman). At times even the very formal, older term of Vossa Excelencia (Your Excellency) is used. Yoyô is an old term formerly used by some slaves toward their masters, and although it is generally restricted to white people, there are occasions when a member of a mulatto family is known to his intimates as yoyô. With rare exceptions, members of the upper class address all those below them simply as você, and usually use the imperative form of the verb in giving directions. These two linguistic devices tend to strengthen and maintain the differences between these groups of people.

[182]

565* 571

Relations between members of Class A and those below are simple. As has already been stated, the landowners avoid the town of Vila Recôncavo, and it is seldom that Class B town people are invited to a social gathering at a plantation or at the factory, so that these two classes are rarely in social contact. Since the rural Class B consists mainly of overseers and other employees of Class A, relationships between them are those of employee and employer. However, when a planter celebrates a special occasion such as a birthday, the overseers are invited, and may "drop in" as a matter of form or courtesy; they escape as soon as possible, for they are rarely included in the brincadeiras (plays, or jokes) of the owners and their guests. For the most part the overseers and others of their class come alone, without their wives and families. This is an important indication of class position, for as a rule the wife of an overseer feels embarrassed in the company of gente (people) and refuses to go even when specially invited. The very strong em familia pattern, combined with the intimacy of the large families, makes it extremely difficult for a lower-class person to feel any sort of equality at such a gathering.

[466]•

565* 574 123 571

During the course of field work the author was given a party, a Reis, a kind of surprise party which takes place during the period following the sixth of January, the Day of Kings.

2: Hutchinson E-4, 5 (1950-1951) 1987 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

VILA RECÔNCAVO

The plantation worker's world is small, and conversational topics are limited to family matters such as births, deaths, marriages, sickness, and other intimate details of personal life, the problems of work, and difficulties of any sort. The planter can know the daily life and thoughts of the workers only through observation, for he himself lives quite differently. However, his knowledge of the workers is apt to be profound in spite of the differences, and he knows much more of their lives than they know of his. On the other hand, visiting between the workers and the members of Class B is on a much more equal basis, for the differences between their modes of living and thinking are small.

When the workers are invited to a party by the planters, it is usually an affair given for them, such as a Christmas celebration. At such a time the planter is host and spectator, rather than host and participant. At other times the workers may get together a song and dance group, a samba, and go to the owner's house for the evening. This is frequently explained as "keeping the patron from being lonely." Again the owner is spectator, for the samba, performed exclusively by women, is a type of folk dance seldom engaged in by the more sophisticated upper class.

Class B in the rural area is only beginning to feel any sort of group consciousness, for the occupational institutions it represents are relatively new and it is not yet aligned in any way with the corresponding class in town. There are two overseers who lack any formal education--indeed, who cannot read or write. In all cases the male members of this class have set up and maintained a family, educating their children and seeing to it that they marry as well as possible. As a rule such men are "self-made"--they have risen from the ranks of workers as a result of their own ability, sagacity, sense of responsibility, and desire to improve themselves. They are distinguished from the workmen by these traits, which seem to develop even further as they have the opportunity to use their initiative.

Members of this group usually acquire numerous possessions of their own, such as horses, oxen and carts, mules, and donkeys which can be put to gainful use. They also operate small stores on their plantations--in one case even a chain of stores, one on each of three plantations. They also try to buy a small farm somewhere nearby. Frequently the employer facilitates such acquisitions as a sort of bonus, lending money or even giving some to the overseer.

2: Hutchinson E-4, 5 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11
VILA RECÔNCAVO

they are generally conceded to be so by the field hands and the members of classes A and B, because their occupations are more specialized and they work in the mill. There are actually several factors which distinguish them from the field laborers, for in addition to receiving protection by national legislation, including minimum salaries and rights to vacations and medical services, they receive from the factory electric light for their houses and firewood. In addition, factory workers do not plant gardens to supply their farina, and they consider themselves far superior to the agricultural laborers in that their own wives "do not use the hoe" (nao pegam na enxada).

At the factory nucleus where both millworkers and the agricultural laborers of one plantation live in the same place, the houses of the former are grouped in the middle of the village, clustered about the owner's chalet, while those of the latter are on the fringes, farther from the usineiro's house, the mill, and the large store. The factory workers' houses are better constructed than those of the field laborers. They are mostly of brick with tile roofs, while the field workers' homes are often of wattle-work covered with plaster and painted over. The houses of the factory nucleus follow the old slavequarter pattern. The buildings are long and narrow and divided into apartments under one roof. The factory owns all the houses, which the workers receive rent-free. The factory worker is better paid than the field worker, and consequently has more and better material possessions. His house is better furnished, and he dresses better.

Illiteracy is widespread in the rural area. The factory nucleus has had a state primary school for thirty years, and Pedras, the largest of the factory plantations, has had one for about twenty. As a result the factory workers, as well as the people of Pedras, have had the opportunity to attend four years of primary school. The rural laborers on other plantations, however, have lacked this opportunity in most cases. An exception is the Fazenda das Moças, which has had a school in recent years, for children in the daytime and for adults at night.

The social life of the workers is almost entirely confined to the place in which they live. Their lives are spent on the plantation except for the days when they walk to the fair in Centro, usually on the Monday following payday. During the summer, when the roads are good for travel, they are busy with the

3t Hutchinson E-4,5 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11
VILA RECÔNCAVO

poration has extensive landholdings in other parts of the state, but they are exploited on an impersonal, profit basis, not on the traditional, paternalistic basis common in the sugar area.

The Helvetians have taken a place in the upper ranks of Bahian society, representing new money and economic power. Their history is important. The original immigrant married into a Bahian family of "good name," and all of his sons have done the same. One of them married a daughter of the Coronel, founder of Usina São Pedro. It was through this marriage that the transfer of the factory was channeled. Today, although the Condes still own stock in the corporation, the Helvetians have the controlling interest, and the Condes are gradually selling their shares to the Helvetians.

The new corporation has brought about many changes in administration of the factory. Although still a family corporation, it has become, from the wider, community, point of view, a strictly business enterprise with no family ties and no face-to-face personal relations. A new directorship and management was established. The new "boss" of the factory is a man from a different part of the state, and his background is entirely different from that of sugar-cane growers. The thread of "family" is still unbroken, for the new manager is related to the new owning family by marriage. He is treated, however, as a paid employee of the corporation. His brother, now general administrator of the agricultural part of the factory-in-the-field, is treated similarly.

These two new managers have put the relations between management and labor on a strictly business basis and have removed all elements of paternalism. Upon taking over, they dismissed most of the older, higher-level factory, field, and office workers. Administrators, mechanics, and bookkeepers, most of whom had seen twenty years or more of service, were dispatched. New people came to take their places, and some of the vacancies were filled by promotions. Time clocks were installed, and the system of authority was reinforced all the way down the line. Social legislation--a new factor in rural, agricultural Brazil--was invoked to take the place of paternalism.

Thus the old, paternalistic, personal, owner-director pattern has changed completely. The chalet is no longer the scene of family gatherings for summer vacations, for Carnaval, or for Christmas; even the traditional Botada has undergone a

change. New faces and basically different relationships prevail at Usina São Pedro.

Another change, but this time in tune with the past, was an increase of capital, applied to the improvement of the factory. The capacity of the mill has been greatly enlarged. However, the agricultural part of the combination continues as it did before, with no innovations. The result is that the factory is able to mill and produce sugar much more quickly than it can be supplied with sugar cane. The hierarchical aspect of the factory as earlier diagrammed remains the same, and each plantation is still run as a separate unit.

In contrast, the private plantation in the community of Vila Recôncavo has undergone relatively little change in these five years. Always the most conservative element in the Recôncavo, the private plantation continues to retain its distinguishing feature: the personal, face-to-face, paternalistic owner-worker relations. The hierarchical pattern remains the same. Operations are still basically hand- and animal-powered, but private planters are slowly introducing mechanization in certain aspects of the process, especially that of transportation; trucks and tractor-drawn wagons carry cane from the fields to the factory. Tractors and mechanical plows are used to an increasingly large extent in the preparation of the soil, and mechanical cultivators are already in use on some plantations. However, the bulk of the work is still done by hand, and traction is supplied by oxen and mules. As yet no mechanical loaders, ditch-diggers, or planters have appeared, and little use is made of fertilization or herbicides. Few scientific agricultural practices are in use. The planter is still first and foremost a "practical" man.

Relations between the factory and the private plantations have also undergone considerable change, in both business and social aspects. The new managers of the factory have succeeded in almost completely alienating the private planters who supply them with sugar cane. Not only the members of the extended Conde family, but also other cane suppliers resented the highhanded, brusque methods of the new managers. Wishing to break completely with the past, the new managers instituted several new policies in relations with the cane suppliers. Formerly the private suppliers bought sugar by the sack, bought their supplies at the company store, and had their machines repaired at the company workshops, paying for such services at the end of the harvest season. The sup-

2: Hutchinson E-4, 5 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11
VILA RECÔNCAVO

178
249*
571

tory and its fields, and who are slowly drifting away from visiting the factory nucleus.

An overall result of the new conditions between private planters and the factory is a desire on the part of the suppliers of São Pedro to become independent of this outlet. Several of the suppliers are shifting their cane to other neighboring factories, when this is convenient. Most of them are seriously considering shifting to another crop, as will be described below; in fact a goodly proportion of land has already been taken out of sugar-cane production, thus diminishing future cane harvests and endangering the cane supply of Usina São Pedro. [311]

What was formerly a peaceful, "all in the family," almost preservelike area has become an area of tensions and of poor business, and social, relations. The situation has all the possibilities of a traditional sugar-cane kind of land capture. The factory needs land in order to produce more cane so that the mill can operate at capacity. No one is willing to sell to the factory, nor even to supply as much cane as he might under other conditions. But the private planters are dependent upon the factory, economically and for services. Therefore it is an easy matter for the factory to make difficulties for the individual planter, even gradually forcing him into failure, since the planter operates on credit and has little latitude for even a single crop failure. Such a failure gives the factory an opportunity to acquire badly needed lands at a bargain. [452] [425]

The sugar industry in the community of Vila Recôncavo has also undergone changes in the labor aspects, in line with the entire industry. As was pointed out in Chapter 4, the price of the sugar cane and the sugar is artificially regulated, and has been rising slowly over a period of years. However, nationwide social legislation in the past three years has raised the wages of the workers annually, before the price increases were granted by the Institute of Sugar and Alcohol. Spiraling inflation has also helped raise all the costs, of labor, of materials, and of machinery. Whereas prices for the task done have always been fairly well regulated, they have recently become a very strong issue, and there is much worker discontent. The planter, whether private or corporate, is more than ever interested in holding down the costs of his labor supply, since other costs, particularly of machinery and repairs, are soaring, always narrowing the margin between the total cost of production and the established selling price. 178 249* 43 [656] [458] [466]

2: Hutchinson E-4,5 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11
VILA RECÔNCAVO

178
*249 For the first time in the history of Vila Recôncavo the work-
468 ers' discontent has taken the form of a strike accompanied by violence. The strike, although a general one throughout the sugar industry, was the first one in which workers of Vila Recôncavo participated. It was specifically directed against the
178 agricultural part of the factory combination; however, it af-
*249 fected some private plantations as well, and was joined by
468 workers of private plantations. The strike was put down im-
467 mediately and effectively by the state police. On investigation the police found considerable Communist literature and prop-
668 aganda in the quarters of the labor union in Centro which had
[625] organized the strike. The labor union itself was illegal, since it was not registered with the proper authorities, and its leaders were well-known Communist agitators. What is important for our study is the appearance in the community of Vila Recôncavo of written and verbal Communist propaganda and the willingness of the local agricultural workers to participate in a general strike. This is a tremendous change for such a conservative area, where loyalty and paternalism have always been so strong.

178 Thus the sugar industry of Vila Recôncavo has entered a
*249 phase of many new difficulties: ties between factory and pri-
571 vate planters are strained, and labor relations are becoming
466 a problem for the private, as well as the corporate, planters. Inflation and the "dollar situation," which affect planters directly since all machinery must be imported, are also working toward the build-up of a new "crisis," continuing the pattern described in Chapter 3.

178 However, a new element is entering the community of Vila
245 Recôncavo in the form of a new crop, cacao. One of the plant-
242 ers began experimenting with cacao during the author's first period of research in Vila Reconcavo. However, at least five years must pass before it can be known if the cacao tree will give satisfactory fruit. At the end of 1955 the Institute of Cacao of Bahia presented the experiment to the public as a success and is now systematically stimulating interest in cacao as a possible and lucrative substitute for sugar cane.

245 Cacao is Bahia's major export crop and in general means
439 money to a Bahian. Still more attractive is the fact that the
178 cacao introduced to the Recôncavo is a genetic mutation, giv-
*[249] ing a white-seeded fruit which brings a much higher price on the world market than does the ordinary fruit. The financial attraction of cacao, plus the disagreeable and financially weak

ties between Negroes and whites on these colonial plantations. All writers have mentioned the frequency of sexual relations between the white plantation owners and their female slaves. Slavery was not a humane institution in Brazil or elsewhere, but in Brazil relations between the slave and the master were of a more personal nature than in other regions where slavery existed in the New World.

By the middle of the last century, the West Indies and other regions of the world were competing with the Brazilian north-east for the world sugar market; and the abolition of slavery in 1888 caused difficulties of labour supply on these plantations. The sugar industry no longer provided the great wealth that it had in the past, and many of the old plantations were abandoned or sold to large commercial companies who installed modern equipment for large-scale sugar production. Plantation slaves became wage labourers, and the old traditional patterns of behaviour between the Negro slave and the white plantation-owning aristocrat began to disappear, to be replaced by an impersonal employee-employer relationship in keeping with the new way of life. Yet many patterns persist from the days of the old plantation system. Many of the descendants of the aristocratic plantation owners try to preserve the old traditions. They are proud of their family names, and large aristocratic families are still important in the economic and social life of the region. In many rural localities, there are still plantations where the relations between the workers and the owners are highly personalized, as they were in the past, and where customs and traditions formed during the period of opulence and slavery continue, if modified, by modern conditions. Throughout this part of Brazil, the relations between people of different racial groups have been influenced by the large proportion of Negroes in the population, by the importance of slavery in the relatively recent past, and by the particular form which the relations between the Negro slave and the European master took on the plantations.

11. The community with which the present article is concerned is called Vila Recôncavo; it is a real town situated in the zone known as the Recôncavo which surrounds Salvador, the capital of the State of Bahia, and which borders on the Bay of All Saints, extending inland from the shores of the bay some 30 miles on the northern side, and considerably less on the southern side. The Recôncavo was characteristic of the whole north-eastern plantation region. The Portuguese who settled in Salvador in 1549 recognized the value of these lands around the new city and the Bay of All Saints for sugar production. The third governor of Bahia, Mem de Sá (1557–74),

249
178
0466
[464]

In the very large *usinas*, the mill hands and even the field hands are modern industrial workers. They are employees of a large industrial corporation and are protected at least theoretically by the labour laws of the nation. The highly personalized relationship between the plantation workers and the owner-administrator of his own plantation, which persisted from the slave era, has been replaced on the larger *usinas* by the impersonal employee-employer relationship of the modern industrial age. Today, modern plantations and small towns have electricity; there is modern housing for workmen; the State and even the sugar companies provide medical aid; there are primary schools both in the small towns and on many plantations; recreation facilities are found in the towns and provided by the *usinas*; and the sugar-cane experimental station situated in the area constantly urges fertilization of the land and modern techniques and methods of sugar-cane production. But the older and more traditional patterns exist side by side with the new, and each of them influences the relations among the racial groups of the zone.

[365]
[362]
[743]
[872]
[529]
[242]

361
[131]
[634]

III. Vila Recôncavo is a small town on the Bay of All Saints. The rural area around it, which lies within the social and economic orbit of the town and which is the unit under consideration, comprises some 80 square kilometres, or slightly less than half the entire area of the county of which the town of Vila Recôncavo is the county seat.[1]

[423]
[634]
[504]
[487]
[438]
[162]
634

It this area there are 14 plantations, three of which nowadays plant very little sugar cane. Parts of the town itself are built on the land of one of these plantations, and the rest of the town area is owned in small lots by private individuals or by the Church. Although Vila Recôncavo is the county seat, local government is the only important function which it fulfils for the surrounding area. It is not used as a shipping point, either for receiving supplies from the outside or for sending sugar to the outside. *Braços do mar*, or inlets of the bay, go to many of the plantations and are deep enough for the *saveiros* (shallow draft sailboats) used on the bay for transport. Many of the plantations have direct connexion with Salvador. Commerce in Vila Recôncavo is almost entirely limited to supplying the 1,462 inhabitants of the town and of some small islands and of one community near by which is not devoted to sugar production. It is not the major supply source even for these groups which live near enough to another and far larger commercial centre where they prefer to do their marketing. The *prefeito* or mayor of the county is rarely a resident of the town itself. Rather he is usually a planter of the surrounding area. He goes into town to do municipal business,

[1] Both the town and the county bear the name of Vila Recôncavo.

249
[464]
[241] sugar workers move rarely, remaining for generations on the same plantation. Each family has its garden where a little maize, beans
[465] and manioc are grown. Pay day comes every two weeks, when as a rule the worker goes to the owner's house to receive his money.
[461] The pay is small, 15 to 25 dollars a fortnight, depending on how much the man has worked during the period. Men do not like to work more than five to six hours a day, from six a.m. to twelve noon, and seldom work more than five days a week. They work easily, without hurry. In the afternoon they work in their garden, if their
249 wives have not already done so. On the plantation no one starves;
466 everyone has his *patrão* (protector) in the person of the owner, and in case of an emergency, accident or sickness, he expects help from him. This personal element is very important on most plantations in the vicinity of Vila Recôncavo; as a rule, the owner knows all the workers by name, knows their families and their family troubles and
[164] problems. He is aware of their love affairs and up-to-date on the health of new-born children and their mothers. Nearly all cases of sickness, from common colds and rheumatism to more serious ailments, are brought directly to the attention of the *patrão* or his wife. The owner, returning from a prolonged stay in the city, receives visits from the workers or from their wives, during which all the personal gossip is exchanged. The workers inquire about the owner's family and more extended family, for they generally know them all. Engagements, weddings, births, deaths and illnesses are reported on both sides. Complaints or requests are also made to the owner. The relationship is highly personal, intimate, gentle and frank.

466 On one rather small *usina*, which will be called São Pedro, in the
249 rural zone of Vila Recôncavo, the situation is somewhat different.
472 São Pedro is not one of the large *usinas* of the Recôncavo, owned by a corporation; it is relatively small and owned by one of the most
[473] important families of the Vila Recôncavo community, members of the regional aristocracy whose family has held plantations there for many generations. Because the owners of the *usina* actually administrate it, and since they are in residence in the locality at least part of the year, they are able to maintain many of the traditional personal relations with their employees, many of whom have worked on the plantations belonging to their family and in the *usina* for most
[162] of their lives. But there is a total of 1,183 workers and their families at the *usina* and on the plantations belonging to São Pedro, and the very size of the enterprise and the number of workers make for a more impersonal and more strictly economic relationship between employer and employee. Workers become more a name on a payroll, and the employer a person with whom one seldom has direct contact. In the larger *usinas* of the Recôncavo this trend is even more marked especially where the employer is a large corporation with offices in Salvador.

563
192
826

8. The *moreno* has excellent skin, fine-textured and smooth. He is light-skinned but not white. He has dark hair, which is long and either wavy or curly. It is manageable and does not need straightening. His features are much more Caucasoid than Negroid. Here again we can distinguish between the dark and light *morenos*. Also we must distinguish between the *moreno mulato*, and the *moreno* of the white families—the *moreno branco*. *Moreno*, as used regarding the 'white', distinguishes the brunet from the blond of the same group.

Few people fit any of these 'racial' types 100 per cent. When someone comes very close to being a perfect *preto*—that is, has all the characteristics of the *preto*—people call him *bem preto* or *bem pretinho* (really black). The same is true of the *sarará*—*bem sarará*, or of the *moreno*, who will be called *bem morenínho* or *moreno fino*. It is just as difficult to find the perfect type for the other classifications, because there are so many variations. Often an individual is of one physical type, but has one or more characteristics of another type. For instance, one young man in Vila Recôncavo has the characteristics of an *escuro*, but since most people like him they prefer to think of him as *moreno*. He has fine skin and thin facial features, but tight kinky hair. People generally refer to him as *moreno*, adding '*mas êle tem cabelo ruim*' (but he has poor hair). One frequently hears 'he is *mulato*, but very light'. These verbal descriptions paint a vivid picture of the person in question. In Vila Recôncavo, it is not simply a matter of black and white, but of all the shades in between.

563
826

A term of classification not listed above, *caboclo*, presents something of a special case. As mentioned earlier, most people with Amerindian physical traits have come into the Recôncavo from the *sertão* during the dry spells in the North. Considering the length of time that people of the North have been periodically coming into the Recôncavo, comparatively few have remained. Nevertheless, the population of Vila Recôncavo has a considerable *caboclo* element—that is, of people with a reddish or bronze tinge to their skin colour, more prominent cheek bones than the African or white elements, and a tendency toward almond-shaped eyes. However, few people in Vila Recôncavo bearing these marks are called *caboclos*. They are classified instead in the local terms listed above, ignoring Indian traits. In Vila Recôncavo, there is a certain disprasal of the *caboclo*. He is considered less civilized than the resident of the Recôncavo, though often known as a better worker, more ambitious, trustworthy, more frugal; also less genial than the easy-going person of the Recôncavo. In the rural area of Vila Recôncavo, each year many *caboclo* men come to the plantations to work during harvest time. For the most part they stay together, away from the *morador*, or resident worker of the plantation. The plantations construct a type of barracks to accommodate these men, who do

563
[829]

249
563
464
466

563
[464]
[466]
[249]

their own cooking, care for their own clothes, and spend their evenings gathered around a fire, singing songs of the *sertão*, apart from the permanent workers.

There is a mutual desire to keep apart, for while the *morador* looks down on the *caboclo*, the *caboclo* feels very much the same about the local people. He feels that they are lazy, ignorant, and above all superstitious. The *caboclo vaqueiro* (north-eastern cowboy) of one plantation says that the workers of the plantation are always talking about black magic, that they are lazy and spendthrifts, and at the same time deride his frugality. He says he is not afraid of their black magic, since he knows there is nothing to it, but he distrusts those who speak of it. People in Vila Recôncavo will not admit they have *caboclo* or Indian ancestors. One young girl who is almost a perfect American Indian type says she is a *mulatinha*.[1] She vehemently denied there was any Indian blood in her family, but finally reluctantly admitted that a great-grandparent of hers had been partly Indian. This girl's niece would make a perfect double for the popular conception of Pocahontas, given a feather in her hair and a sarong, but she is considered a '*mulata*, almost *morena*'.

However, among the 'pure' whites there is a different feeling about the *caboclo*. White families say that they would feel proud to know that they have 'Indian blood', for it would show the length of time their family had been in Brazil. Frequently a white child is extremely 'Indian looking', that is, a *moreno* with jet-black, straight hair. The nickname of *tapuya* is often given to this type, which is generally admired by the whites. All plantation owners agree that, for work, no one can top the *caboclo*. The north-eastern worker of [157] American Indian physical type will go into the fields at six in the morning and not return until six at night. He takes his lunch with [461] him and eats it there. On the other hand, the *morador* will go to the fields at six and return at noon. However, as permanent resident [464] workers, plantation owners prefer the Negroes of the Recôncavo. Little if any effort is made to 'fix' the *caboclo* on the plantations. When the harvest is finished, he takes his money and departs. Next year he may come again to the same plantation, or he may not. It seems to make little difference to either party.

There have been no serious tensions between the two groups. [466] They work together during part of the year, but spend their free time separately. This does not mean that an occasional *caboclo* will not stay, take a wife from among the *moradores* and start a family.

The following percentages of racial types were taken from a 162 sample of 162 heads of families, using the four major types: *preto*, 50 or 40 per cent; *mulato*, 59 or 49 per cent; *caboclo*, 3 or 2 per cent; *branco*, 11 or 9 per cent.

[1] Little mulata. Using the diminutive form seems to be a softer and more agreeable way of saying 'mulata'. [829]

563
[565]

planters. People in the upper class of the town, when they can, send their children to the capital to continue their education, and there are several *mestiço* students from Vila Recôncavo studying law, medicine and engineering in Salvador. The intelligence of the mulatto is traditional, and it has been equally traditional that the darker-skinned person is unintelligent. Today these traditions are not as strong as before, but still it is felt that the mulatto has somewhat more aptitude than the Negro. The old idea of the Negro, meant for work and to be servile, still exists, now tempered with the knowledge that education can change the situation. There is only one club in Vila Recôncavo—a football club—and the players are all shades, from white to black, and so are the spectators. They all sit or stand together under the shade of the one big tree which gives shade to the playing field. The field is on the property of a white man who, while he has nothing to do with the team, allows them to play there, put up goal posts and markers. The bar and recreation centre are open to all so long as they wear shoes—a ruling made to keep out the muddy feet of children who came straight from the beach to have a 'coke'. All the racial types and classes get together here to play pool and gossip, this being the one and only point of public social activity in the town. At the movies, the admission price is extremely low, the same for everyone, and all four classes attend. Negroes and whites of all classes sit next to each other. At church there are no special pews, the faithful usually gathering in the front and the less faithful hanging about near the back. The choir and the acolytes are from all classes and colours. At parties, which are few, colour lines are disregarded, *brancos* and *morenos* dance with *mulatos* and *pretos* just as long as both partners can *pular* (jump).

[872]
[828]
[829]
563
529
526
563
529
[565]
563
565
[546]
[794]

The social situation is gradually changing, and the extremely personal element is being lost. It is strongest on the private plantation, where the owner spends the greater part of the year, but at the *usina* much of the personal element is weakened because of the numbers of workers. Even at the *usina*, there is visiting and gossiping between the owners' families and the workers. But at the *usina* not all the workers accept their subservient position as do those of the plantations. This is specially true of the higher echelon of specialists and technicians of the mill, who will frequently not go to a party given by the owner, even though invited. It seems to be a way of saying that the company of the white owners is neither needed nor wanted. They prefer to keep their relations on a strictly business basis. At the *usina*, when a worker is sick, he goes to the medical post where he is treated by a paid nurse, rather than to the owner's house. On pay day, the *usina* worker is paid at the mill by a paymaster, not in the living room of the owner's house. Nevertheless, in spite of the industrialized aspect of the mill, the number of workers is not too large to exclude all personal contact with the owners, who adminis-

[574]
249
178
571
4660
[463]
[574]
[465]

249
178
571
466
[468]
[467]

trate and oversee most of the operations. This type of relationship has proved so satisfactory that up to date there have been no strikes, and no labour movements, or unions formed among the workmen of São Pedro. The length of time the technicians and other workmen of the *usina* have remained in their employ, refusing employment in other *usinas* and other occupations, has been a matter of pride to the owners of São Pedro.

249
466
463
571

It is on the plantations belonging to the *usina* that the white owner-*mestiço* worker personal relations are least close. The *usina* owners are able to make only occasional tours of inspection of the plantations, and therefore have little personal contact with the workers. However, the administrator has in many respects taken the place of the owner. He is the only man on the plantation with authority, and all complaints and requests for favours or help must be presented to him. In one case, an administrator has been on the same plantation for 26 years, and is well-known for the 'court' he holds. Once a year he gives an immense party for the entire community, and people from all four classes attend. He is wanted as godfather for the children of the workmen, and as *compadre* in their marriages. Nevertheless, the administrator is as much an employee of the *usina* as is the worker, and while the administrator can and does assume some of the attitudes and responsibilities of the owner, he cannot assume them all. However, it is a frequent saying among the white-owner class that the real owners are the administrators, for they are the group closest to the workers and to the land. A plantation with a poor administrator is not only a poor producer, but also means hardship for the *moradores*; a poor administrator will take no interest in them, and take little care of them.

249
46
571

In other areas of the Recôncavo, where the *usinas* are larger and more industrialized and where no owner resides either at the *usina* or on one of the plantations, but lives always in Salvador, there is only a paid representative of the corporation at the *usina*. In such large industrial units the personal element is almost entirely lacking both at the *usina* and on the company-owned plantations. There have been cases of labour difficulties, strikes, violence and the intrusion of political groups. In several instances, there are efforts today, on the owner's part to re-establish personal contact with mill and field workers, even on the largest of the corporation *usinas* and plantations.

178
571
466
249

VII. The relations between people of different physical types in Vila Recôncavo and on the surrounding sugar plantations have grown out of the plantation-slave system which flourished in the region about a century ago. Many patterns and attitudes formed in that epoch persist even today in the town and on the privately-owned plantations in the vicinity.

plantations in the vicinity. There is the aristocratic group of whites descendants of the *senhores de engenho*—who form almost a caste, marrying among themselves and living out their own social life apart from the Negro and racially mixed population of the community. Just as the slave owners in the past, however, they depend upon the Negro and *mestiço* for labour; the Negro is pictured as the faithful servant and attendant of the white aristocrat. Again, as in the past, the mulatto who was the offspring of the European master and a slave mother is pictured as a social upstart and an intelligent trouble-maker. Yet it is the man of mixed ancestry who holds the intermediate economic and social positions; he is the minor bureaucrat, the technician in the *usina*, and the administrator and *feitor* on the plantations. The essential hierarchy has changed little since colonial times; and the relationship between these aristocratic whites and their Negro and mixed workmen is still a highly personal one lacking in social tensions, since each knows his proper position and each knows his rights, duties and obligations toward the other.

There is no race problem in Vila Recôncavo, nor does prejudice or discrimination work out as it does in other parts of the Western world. A Negro cannot become a member of the aristocracy, but a well-educated and economically successful Negro can have easy social relations with this stratum. Negro ancestry is without doubt a grave disadvantage in economic and social mobility, but there are no political and economic positions closed to a man of Negro or mixed descent. As yet, however, only a few Negroes have moved into high political or economic positions. There is only one plantation owner who is a Negro, and Negroes and *mestiços* hold only minor bureaucratic and political positions in the community. The *prefeito* or mayor has nearly always been drawn from the aristocratic white group, and has never been challenged from the Negro and mixed population. Yet in the town and among the mill workers, 'people of colour' are beginning to show independence, and unwillingness always to occupy a subservient and lowly position. The administrators like to ride better horses than the aristocrats, to have fancier saddles, to dress better, and to be more ostentatious than their employers. Many townspeople know the big city, and the essential class and racial democracy which exists there. There is competition to join the local upper class, and derogatory racial criteria are used to deride competitors who would like to rise out of the lower class groups into this growing upper class. African culture traits such as *candomblé* and the cult of Janaina are associated with low status, and people who would rise in the local social hierarchy are anxious to disassociate themselves from these groups.

As modern attitudes and ideology penetrate Vila Recôncavo, there are more and more problems of class relationships; the population is becoming extremely class-conscious, and there is an in-

4: Pierson Z-4,5 (1935-1937) 1967
SOll Bahia Brazilians SOll
BRAZIL SL1

B
BB
* 121
* 563
565

neighboring state of Sergipe.[23] Wagley (1963b:152–53) considered as "among the most important" of these generalizations portions of hypotheses 17 and 22, as well as the concluding paragraph, and restated them as follows: 1) "Brazil is a multi-racial class[24] society distinct from India, for example, where the social order is based upon the principle of caste and from those parts of the world where a national or racial minority (or minorities) is in free association with, but not accepted by, a dominant national or racial majority"; 2) "prejudice exists in Brazil; but it is *class* rather than *race* prejudice"; 3) "this does not mean that there are no social distinctions in Brazil. . . . Neither does it mean that there is no discrimination or that blacks or mixed-bloods are completely satisfied with their lot. But it does mean (a) that a man of color may, by reason of individual merit or favorable circumstances, improve his status and even achieve position in the upper levels of society, and (b) that this position will then be with reference not merely to the darker group whose color he shares but to the total community."

* BB
* 121
• 466
178
571

In the Recôncavo area around the city of Bahia, Hutchinson (1957) and Costa Pinto (1958) report a shift under way in the relations between laborer and employer, from the formerly personal and face-to-face relations of the colonial and subsequent periods to those of a more contractual character,

[23] The statement on p. 134 of this book to the effect that a strictly-drawn color line would have to pass through families also has been noted by many other observers, including Frazier (1944:166) and Nelson de Souza Sampaio (1944) at Bahia; Freyre (1959:8) at Recife; and Willems (1949:407) at São Paulo.

[24] It is perhaps obvious that neither Wagley nor the present author uses the term "class" in the sense popular today in certain circles, wherein the "classes" and the "masses" are distinguished. On the contrary, it seems legitimate to include all persons in the class structure, whatever their rank.

4: Pierson Z-4, 5 (1935-1937) 1967
SOll Bahia Brazilians SOll
BRAZIL SLI

as the old patriarchal order continues to decline and industrialization increases; a shift which is intensified by the secularization deriving from the increasingly metropolitan character of the area and by the gradual emergence of new social groups. Have these and the other changes sketched above been sufficient to alter the character of the "racial" situation at Bahia since our original study was made? After a careful survey of the studies in the area in recent years, it seems to us that the evidence would lead one to agree with Wagley:[25] "Change has occurred, but *not* that much."

As Thales de Azevedo has pointed out (1955a:197), however, the possibilities of colored persons rising in class are increasing at Bahia; and many observers believe that this rise will continue to increase in the future. As this alteration in rank extends to continually larger and larger numbers of previously underprivileged individuals, greater strains and pressures probably will be exerted throughout the social order. For one thing, as Bahia continues to grow into a larger and larger metropolitan center, relations will be more difficult to maintain on a primary and face-to-face basis; and, for another, the anticipated industrialization, deriving from the extraction of petroleum resources in the area and the utilization of the recently-developed electric power on the São Francisco river, will in all likelihood augment the presently increasing anonymity and make relations more contractual and categoric. Moreover, as educational opportunities increase and extend downward further into the masses of previously unlettered individuals, thus adding to the effects of these other processes, the social order of Bahia may alter, perhaps markedly.

Wagley (1955:12) writes that "many" of the hypotheses

[25] In a letter to the author.

4: Pierson Z-4, 5 (1935-1937) 1967
SOll Bahia Brazilians SOll

[City of Salvador]

siderable extent over those of the male portion, the church exercises a substantial measure of control. Prestige of the military is high.

The large family, with its wide ramifications and its patriarchal organization, also bespeaks a preindustrial era. Social cohesion in the community is maintained by the close association of members of these large family groups, together with the intimate ties common to friends of long standing, the degree of whose intimacy is much greater than that ordinarily to be found in the cities of comparable size in industrial societies. One notes in Bahia a warmth of manner uncommon to the United States. Bahians, like most Brazilians, tend to be very affectionate in the family and warmhearted toward their friends. Characteristic of such primary relationships is a high order of courtesy and politeness and an almost limitless consideration for the convenience and comfort of relatives and friends. Religious affiliation and guild association weave further strands of solidarity, binding the urban community together as if it were merely an overgrown village.

In this stable society there is a comparative absence of most forms of conflict. In commerce and finance competition is comparatively slight and limited in considerable measure to foreigners. The economy is almost entirely extractive and industry is minimal. The few differences which arise between labor and capital often take the form of a

ual educated in Rio, to be seen on the beaches. Snug-fitting street dresses or those made of sheer or transparent material, and skirts which do not fall at least several inches below the knee, are subject to general criticism. At the exit of the principal churches and cathedrals is posted an official proclamation of the archbishop of Bahia specifying permissible dress. Failure to observe these regulations automatically bars the offender from the sacraments of the church.

4: Pierson Z-4, 5 (1935-1937) 1967
SOil Bahia Brazilians SOil

[City of Salvador]

struggle of native labor versus foreign capital and thus tend to unify rather than to divide the local group. Religious competition has not become severe enough to intensify self-consciousness on the part of rival adherents and thus evoke serious animosities. As far as national affairs are concerned, intense local loyalties had not, at least at the time this study was made, been seriously exacerbated by onerous control from without. A minimum of racial conflict will be evident throughout this account.

THE *ricos* OF THE RIDGES AND THE *pobres* OF THE VALLEYS

One of the things Darwin noted, when he visited Bahia in 1832, was that the city rested upon "a level plain of about three hundred feet in elevation, which in all parts has been worn into flat-bottomed valleys."[11] Today the scene is still much as Darwin saw it. Continuing erosion has merely emphasized the general characteristics of the landscape, transforming the once level plain somewhat more decidedly into alternating ridges, relatively steep declivities, and comparatively narrow valleys.

This physiography of the country has not been without significance in the cultural life of Bahia; for, in general, the distribution of the population by classes, and even to some extent by ethnic divisions, follows quite closely the lay of the land. Along the ridges, which wind with the changing terrain, ordinarily run the principal streets, bearing the chief lines of transportation, whether by streetcar, bus, or automobile. So far as accessibility to the center and other principal parts of the city is concerned, here are the more convenient residential locations. The elevation of the ridges,

[11] Charles Darwin, *The Voyage of the Beagle* ("Harvard Classics," Vol. XXIX [New York, 1909]), p. 521.

4: Pierson Z-4, 5 (1935-1937) 1967
SOll Bahia Brazilians SOll

and that the sudden liberation of large numbers of subjected blacks would subvert public order gradually melted away as the numbers of emancipated Negroes increased and these freedmen gave evidence of their ability and willingness to become an orderly part of the free population and to labor as effectively, if not more effectively, for wages as when impelled by physical force.

The free people of color (who by 1872 largely outnumbered the slaves)[97] were, Southey says, "an industrious and useful part of the population: most of the maize, manioc and pulse, with which the towns were supplied, was raised by them upon small pieces of ground, which they rented of the great proprietors at a low rate."[98] Freedmen were also employed as laborers on the large estates, where they lived as squatters on the land of their employers, erecting mud and palm-leaf huts for their families, and looking to the planter for protection from any who would do them harm.[99] In the towns they were employed principally as artisans, porters, messengers, barbers, street merchants and small shopkeep-

[97] Johnston, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

[98] Southey, *op. cit.*, III, 787. Cf. also: "The masters who freed slaves often gave them, with their liberty, a piece of land to insure their subsistence. The Negroes who have inherited these small holdings are to-day (1911) the best element of the black agricultural population" (Pierre Denis, *Brasil*, trans. from the French by Bernard Miall [New York, 1911], p. 322).

[99] Koster writes: "The Negroes in my possession could not perform what ought to be done in proper time; and therefore I collected free laborers for the purpose, and in a short period between thirty and forty men, some of whom brought their families, removed on to the lands of the plantation; and most of them erected hovels of palm-leaves, in which they dwelt; but a few of them were accommodated with huts of mud. . . . . Many of these fellows would have committed almost any crime under the impression that my protection would screen them" (*op. cit.*, I, 295, 297).

[SALVADOR]

/20 cont./

829 "the mulattoes, especially the lightest ones, are the worst
*563 enemies of other métis and the Blacks. It is they who have the most prejudice and who offer the most resistance to the social ascent of persons of color." These feelings are, in part, the formulation of class anatagonisms between morenos and light mulattoes of high rank, "whites socially speaking," and the darker persons who strive to improve their position in the society.

829 According to a woman occupying a public office, the heads
*563 of her department, who are pardos in different degrees, recom-
• 466 mend to their subordinates that they hire only attractive candidates and not take into consideration "black or homely women."

/21/

Population Increase and Crossbreeding

*563 A very significant fact and one that testifies to the good racial
162 relations in Bahia is the intensity of crossbreeding. There are in the city approximately 400,000 inhabitants, of whom almost 20 o/o are Blacks, 47 o/o métis, the majority mulattoes, and
*563 33 o/o Whites. Everywhere one sees persons of all ages, inter-
571 mingled without any distinction of type, men and women, gathered in the most frequented places, commenting on the events of the day, appraising the coming and going in the streets or discussing politics and sports, drinking in the cafés, walking in the environs and on the beaches, making purchases in the shops and in the markets, working in the mills, in the yards, in business firms and in the public administrations and the offices, traveling by means of public transportation, taking part in religious festivals and civic commemorations, without the least constraint. Friends,
[5%) mulattoes, Whites, and Blacks, congratulate one another with a great display of embraces and handshakes; they sit down next to one another in the theater, in churches, in cafés, or in streetcars
*563 with the greatest ease. In accordance with local customs, con-
565 firmed by Pierson (1),
829

1. Donald Pierson, op. cit., p. 421.